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The Chapter on Mañjuśrī's Magical Display

Mañjuśrīvikurvāṇaparivarta

Translated into Tibetan by
Jinamitra · Śīlendrabodhi · Yeshe Dé

འཕགས་པ་འཇམ་དཔལ་རྣམ་པར་འཕྲུལ་པའི་ལཱུ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོའི་མདོ།

'phags pa 'jam dpal rnam par 'phrul pa'i le'u zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo

The Noble Great Vehicle Sūtra “The Chapter on Mañjuśrī’s Magical Display”

Āryamañjuśrīvikurvāṇaparivartanāmamahāyānasūtra



Toh 97

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SUMMARY

- s.1 In *The Chapter on Mañjuśrī's Magical Display*, the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī answers a series of questions posed by the god Great Light concerning the appropriate conduct for bodhisattvas and the potential pitfalls and obstacles presented to bodhisattvas by Māra. Midway through the sūtra, the demon Māra himself appears and, after being captured and converted by Mañjuśrī, he begins to teach the Buddha's Dharma to the audience. After revealing that Māra was never truly bound by anything other than his own perception, Mañjuśrī resumes his teaching for the remainder of the sūtra.

ac.

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ac.1 Translated by the Dharmachakra Translation Committee under the supervision of Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche. The translation was produced by Benjamin Ewing, who also wrote the introduction. Andreas Doctor and James Gentry compared the translation with the original Tibetan and edited the text.

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i.

INTRODUCTION

i.1

*The Chapter on Mañjuśrī's Magical Display*¹ provides a teaching on the subject of the appropriate conduct for bodhisattvas. Set in the Jeta Grove, on the outskirts of Śrāvastī, the sūtra is framed primarily as a conversation between the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī and the god Great Light, while the Buddha listens to their dialog and occasionally comments. The god Great Light poses a series of questions to Mañjuśrī as to how bodhisattvas should conduct themselves properly and avoid the negative influence of Māra. While these questions generally deal with basic tenets of Buddhism and monastic conduct, Mañjuśrī's answers prioritize intention and proper view over actions themselves.

i.2

Midway through the text, the evil demon Māra makes an appearance in the form of a dark cloud (151). He is caught and bound by Mañjuśrī, who transforms him into a propagator of the Buddha's teaching. In the section that follows, Māra unwillingly responds to questions from elder members of the sangha concerning proper conduct as well as the bodhisattva path. At the end of this section, the god Susīma requests Mañjuśrī to free Māra (175). Mañjuśrī responds by saying that Māra was never physically bound, just as beings are not truly bound by suffering either. In fact, both can be liberated by understanding the empty nature of their perceived bonds. Following this section, Mañjuśrī resumes his answers to questions about the bodhisattva path.

i.3

Throughout the sūtra, conventional aspects of the Buddhist path, from generosity and discipline to insight and wisdom, are framed within an understanding of the empty nature of phenomena. In response to questions about the most appropriate conduct, Mañjuśrī teaches that the primary concern must be the proper view, rather than physical actions. Likewise, while Māra is bound by Mañjuśrī's power, he explains to the elder Upāli that upholding monastic discipline, too, is dependent upon understanding the empty nature of phenomena. Although the sūtra teaches that the view of

ultimate truth is paramount, it also makes clear that bodhisattvas must engage with beings on the conventional level for the sake of helping others. In this way, skillful means and insight, which are so central to the path of the Mahāyāna, are united.

i.4 *The Chapter on Mañjuśrī's Magical Display* is prominently placed in the Degé Kangyur as the fourth scripture in the General Sūtra section.² It appears to have been an influential scripture in both India and Tibet, as it is quoted by scholars as prominent as Vasubandhu (fourth–fifth century CE),³ Gampopa Sönam Rinchen (*sgam po pa bsod nams rin chen*, 1079–1153),⁴ and Longchen Rabjam (*klong chen rab 'byams*, 1308–1364).⁵ It also appears that this sūtra was at times confused with a similarly named sūtra, *The Play of Mañjuśrī* (*Mañjuśrī vikrīḍitasūtra*, Toh 96).⁶

i.5 While there is no extant Sanskrit or other Indic version of this text, we can trace its textual history back to at least 289 CE, when it was first translated into Chinese (Taishō 589).⁷ The translator was the monk Dharmarakṣa, who was one of the most important translators of Mahāyāna Buddhist texts in China; he was responsible for the translation of around 150 texts, including the first Chinese version of the *Lotus Sūtra*.⁸ Another text identified with this title was translated into Chinese in 427 CE by Zhi Yan and Bao Yun (Taishō 590),⁹ although it is much shorter and contains other differences in content that make its precise identity difficult to determine without further research. We can reliably date the Tibetan translation to the early ninth century at the latest, as it appears in the imperial Denkarma (*ldan kar ma*) catalog.¹⁰ The translators for the Tibetan version were the translator-editor Yeshé Dé and the Indian preceptors Śīlendrabodhi and Jinamitra. This sūtra was also translated into Mongolian and Korean and included in their respective canons.

i.6 This translation was prepared primarily based on the Degé Kangyur version of *The Magical Display of Mañjuśrī*. The Stok Palace manuscript and the Comparative Edition (Tib. *dpe bsdur ma*) were also consulted for variant readings.

The Noble Great Vehicle Sūtra

The Chapter on Mañjuśrī's Magical Display

1.

The Translation

[F.242.a]

1.1 Homage to all buddhas and bodhisattvas!

Thus did I hear at one time. The Blessed One was residing in Śrāvastī, in the Jeta Grove, the park of Anāthapiṇḍada, together with a great monastic assembly of 1,250 monks. Also in attendance was a great assembly of bodhisattvas, as well as gods of the desire realm, gods of the form realm, and various gods of the pure abodes. There, surrounded and revered by his retinue of many hundreds of thousands, the Blessed One was teaching the Dharma.

1.2 Present in the assembly at that time was a divine being known as Great Light. Also present in the assembly was youthful Mañjuśrī. The god Great Light asked youthful Mañjuśrī, “Mañjuśrī, when Māra creates obstacles to the bodhisattvas’ unexcelled and perfect awakening, then, Mañjuśrī, what are the workings of Māra with respect to bodhisattvas?”

1.3 Youthful Mañjuśrī replied to the god Great Light, “Divine being, as long as there are actions, there are the workings of Māra. As long as there are aspirations, misapprehensions, or valuations, there are the workings of Māra. As long as there are desires, conceptions, assumptions, or superimpositions, there are the workings of Māra. Also, divine being, clinging to the mind of awakening is the working of Māra. Clinging to an attitude of generosity is the working of Māra. Clinging to thoughts of discipline, patience, diligence, concentration, and insight is also the working of Māra. [F.242.b] Being arrogant about generosity, esteeming discipline, grasping at patience, adopting diligence, practicing concentration with marks, and having discursive insight are also the workings of Māra. Liking and wishing for the wilderness and falling into indifference are also the workings of Māra. Entertaining assumptions about having few desires, being content, engaging in ascetic practices, and reducing one’s possessions

is also the working of Māra. To have assumptions and presumptions, such as 'I abide in emptiness,' 'I rest free from marks,' 'I rest without wishes,' 'I rest without conceptual elaborations,' and 'I have obtained and adhere to the instructions of the Thus-Gone One,' is also the working of Māra. Divine being, as long as there are objects of thought, imagination, superimposition, sight, hearing, discrimination, or cognition, there are the workings of Māra."

1.4 "Mañjuśrī, from where do the workings of Māra arise?" asked the god.

"Divine being, the workings of Māra arise from exertion," replied Mañjuśrī. "Why is that? Divine being, in exertion, there is an opportunity for Māra. On the other hand, what could Māra accomplish with nonexertion? So exertion itself is the working of Māra."

1.5 "Mañjuśrī, how do bodhisattvas exert themselves, and how do they not exert themselves?" asked the god.

"Divine being, even while they are engaged with duality, they are not exerting themselves," replied Mañjuśrī. "Why is that? To abide in the world is to have engagement with duality. Divine being, *exertion* is a synonym for proper engagement. *Proper engagement* is a synonym for nonengagement. *Nonengagement* is a synonym for the absence of conceptual elaboration. *Absence of conceptual elaboration* is a synonym for proper engagement.

1.6 "Divine being, not engaging with the eyes or form is known as the proper engagement of bodhisattvas. Not engaging with the ear or sound, [F.243.a] the nose or smell, the tongue or taste, the body or texture, or the mind or mental phenomena is known as the proper engagement of bodhisattvas. Divine being, moreover, bodhisattvas do not engage with any affliction, yet they exert themselves for the sake of eliminating the afflictions of beings. This is known as the proper engagement of bodhisattvas. Divine being, moreover, bodhisattvas do not engage with the three realms, yet they engage with the beings who appear within the three realms. This is known as the proper engagement of bodhisattvas.

1.7 "Moreover, bodhisattvas engage in generosity free from arrogance, yet they also engage in attracting miserly beings. They engage in discipline without arrogance, yet they also engage in attracting immoral beings. They engage in patience without arrogance, yet they also engage in attracting vindictive beings. They engage in diligence without arrogance, yet they also engage in attracting lazy beings. They engage in concentration without arrogance, yet they also engage in attracting distracted beings. They engage in insight without arrogance, yet they also engage in attracting ignorant beings. These, too, are known as the proper engagement of bodhisattvas.

1.8 "Moreover, bodhisattvas engage in emptiness without arrogance. The absence of any view, while also not being free from views, is to engage in emptiness. Emptiness is empty of emptiness. Due to that emptiness, views

are empty. Likewise, due to the emptiness by which views are empty, all phenomena are empty. To understand this—without having special pride in that understanding—is the proper engagement of bodhisattvas.

1.9 “Moreover, divine being, bodhisattvas engage in the absence of marks without arrogance. The absence of any thought, [F.243.b] while also not being free from thoughts, is engagement in the absence of marks. The thought through which the absence of marks is conceived is the same as the absence of marks. Bodhisattvas understand the sameness of conceptual thinking and the absence of marks by means of conceptual thinking that is devoid of marks. To understand this—without having special pride in that understanding—is the proper engagement of bodhisattvas.

1.10 “Moreover, bodhisattvas engage in the absence of wishes without arrogance, yet they also engage in willfully taking birth. Although they make aspirations, they do not form habitual thought patterns. Although they make aspirations, they are not involved in discursive thoughts due to those aspirations. Birth after birth, they are free of the views of the two extremes. They are free of the views of clinging to *me* and *mine*. Birth after birth, they are free of tumbling from death to rebirth. To understand this—without having special pride in that understanding—is the proper engagement of bodhisattvas.

1.11 “Moreover, divine being, the most excellent proper engagement of bodhisattvas is as follows:

“With their knowledge of insight, bodhisattvas do not exert themselves; yet they engage in gathering all virtuous qualities, through their knowledge of skillful means.

1.12 “With their knowledge of insight, bodhisattvas engage in the lack of a self, the lack of a being, the lack of a life principle, the lack of a soul, and the lack of a person; yet they also engage in the ripening of all beings, through their knowledge of skillful means.

“With their knowledge of insight, bodhisattvas engage in neither accepting nor rejecting anything; yet they also engage in embracing all phenomena, through their knowledge of skillful means.

1.13 “With their knowledge of insight, bodhisattvas engage in the indivisibility of all buddhas and the realm of phenomena; yet they also engage in venerating, honoring, worshiping, and serving all buddhas, through their knowledge of skillful means.

“With their knowledge of insight, bodhisattvas engage with all buddhafiels as being the field of space; yet they also fully engage with the ornamental array of qualities in the buddhafiels, [F.244.a] through their knowledge of skillful means.

1.14 “With their knowledge of insight, bodhisattvas engage with all noble ones as being manifestations of the unconditioned nature; yet they also engage with all the noble ones by venerating, respecting, and serving them, through their knowledge of skillful means.

“With their knowledge of insight, bodhisattvas engage with the buddha’s body by considering it to be undefiled; yet they also engage with its major marks, minor marks, and adornments, through their knowledge of skillful means.

1.15 “With their knowledge of insight, bodhisattvas engage with all conditioned things by considering them to be unborn and unarisen; yet they also engage with them by intentionally taking rebirth in existence, through their knowledge of skillful means.

“With their knowledge of insight, bodhisattvas engage with emptiness, the absence of marks, and the absence of wishes; yet they also engage in teaching the abandonment of views, thoughts, and aspirations, through their knowledge of skillful means.

1.16 “With their knowledge of insight, bodhisattvas engage with the superknowledges by considering them to be unborn; yet they also engage with miraculous displays by means of all the superknowledges, through their knowledge of skillful means.

“With their knowledge of insight, bodhisattvas engage with the aggregates, elements, and sense sources as being unborn and uncompounded; yet they also engage in rejecting the aggregates, elements, and sense sources, through their knowledge of skillful means.

1.17 “With their knowledge of insight, bodhisattvas engage with the understanding that existence has the nature of nirvāṇa; yet they also engage in ripening beings in saṃsāra, through their knowledge of skillful means.

“With their knowledge of insight, bodhisattvas engage with the eye of insight; yet they also engage in accomplishing the divine eye, through their knowledge of skillful means.

1.18 “With their knowledge of insight, bodhisattvas engage in the understanding that the Dharma is inexpressible; yet they also engage in teaching the Dharma by means of words and expressions, through their knowledge of skillful means.

“With their knowledge of insight, bodhisattvas engage in the discernment of meaning and doctrine; yet they also engage in the discernment of expression and eloquence, through their knowledge of skillful means.

1.19 “With their knowledge of insight, bodhisattvas engage in knowing the capacities—both high and low—of all beings; [F.244.b] yet they also engage in teaching the Dharma appropriate to each being, through their knowledge of skillful means.

“With their knowledge of insight, bodhisattvas engage in comprehending the 84,000 activities of beings; yet they also teach the 84,000 collections of the Dharma, through their knowledge of skillful means.

“This, divine being, is the most excellent proper engagement of bodhisattvas.”

- 1.20 As youthful Mañjuśrī gave this teaching on proper engagement, the intention to reach unexcelled and perfect awakening arose within eight thousand gods from that assembly, and five thousand bodhisattvas developed acceptance that phenomena are unborn.

The Blessed One gave his approval to youthful Mañjuśrī, saying, “Excellent, Mañjuśrī! You have explained the proper engagement of bodhisattvas well.”

- 1.21 The god Great Light then asked youthful Mañjuśrī, “Mañjuśrī, were you pleased when the Thus-Gone One gave you his approval?”

Mañjuśrī replied, “Divine being, tell me, when one emanation gives approval to another emanation, does that emanation become pleased?”

- 1.22 “Mañjuśrī, if the emanation has no attachment or aversion, how could it become pleased?” asked the god.

“Divine being,” replied Mañjuśrī, “all phenomena have the inherent characteristic of being emanations, and so the Thus-Gone One and Mañjuśrī also have that characteristic. Therefore, why would I become pleased by being praised? By way of analogy, divine being, an echo does not become attached to pleasant or unpleasant sounds. Nor does it become averse to them. Divine being, in that way all phenomena have the inherent nature of an echo. The Thus-Gone One and Mañjuśrī both have that nature. [F.245.a] So how could I become pleased by being praised?”

- 1.23 “Mañjuśrī, to whom did the Thus-Gone One give his approval?” asked the god.

“Divine being,” replied Mañjuśrī, “to one who teaches that consciousness is nonabiding; to one whose mind is unobstructed concerning all the teachings; to one who does not perceive any being as a being; to one who does not perceive any phenomenon as a phenomenon; to one whose intention is set on nirvāṇa, while their activity is rooted in saṃsāra; to one who has understood the actions of Māra and knows the actions of Māra to be buddha activity; and, moreover, to one who understands that if one becomes attached to buddha activity, it too becomes the activity of Māra. It is to a bodhisattva who is righteous in that way, divine being, that the Thus-Gone One gives his approval.”

- 1.24 “Mañjuśrī, why is it that because you are righteous in that way, the Thus-Gone One gives you his approval?” asked the god.

Mañjuśrī replied, “Divine being, tell me, is there any difference within sameness?”

The god responded, “No, Mañjuśrī, there is no difference whatsoever within sameness.”

1.25 Mañjuśrī then said, “Divine being, whatever is the same as sameness is the same as the acts with immediate retribution. Whatever is the same as the acts with immediate retribution is the same as me. Whatever is the same as sameness is the same as views. Whatever is the same as views is the same as me. Whatever is the same as sameness is the same as the misunderstandings. Whatever is the same as the misunderstandings is the same as me. Whatever is the same as sameness is the same as keeping reference points. Whatever is the same as keeping reference points is the same as me. Whatever is the same as sameness is the same as the limit of saṃsāra. Whatever is the same as the limit of saṃsāra is the same as the limit of nirvāṇa. Whatever is the same as the limit of nirvāṇa is the same as the limit of the self. [F.245.b] Whatever is the same as the limit of the self is the same as the limit of reality. Whatever is the same as the limit of reality is the same as the limit of ignorance, existence, and craving. Whatever is the same as the limit of ignorance, existence, and craving is the same as the limit of knowledge and liberation. Whatever is the same as the limit of knowledge and liberation is the same as the limit of desire, aggression, and delusion. Whatever is the same as the limit of desire, aggression, and delusion is the same as the limit of emptiness, the absence of marks, and the absence of wishes. Whatever is the same as the limit of emptiness, the absence of marks, and the absence of wishes is the same as the limit of conditioned phenomena. Whatever is the same as the limit of conditioned phenomena is the same as the limit of unconditioned phenomena. Whatever is the same as the limit of unconditioned phenomena is the same as youthful Mañjuśrī.

1.26 “Divine being, this sameness means that all phenomena are the same. Therefore, all aspects of giving approval—such as who speaks, what they say, where they say it, and to whom they say it—are all the same, just like the sameness of the sky. Since the sky is unconditioned, it is beyond any sameness or difference. Whoever conforms, without conforming, to these types of sameness is the one who receives the Thus-Gone One’s approval.”

1.27 “Mañjuśrī, please clarify this with a Dharma teaching on the topic of what is commendable and not commendable,” requested the god.

“Divine being,” replied Mañjuśrī, “setting out for awakening with altruistic intent is commendable, while practicing trickery and deceit is not commendable. Not abandoning any being because of great compassion is commendable, while harming beings is not commendable. Not having any aggression toward beings is commendable, while a malicious attitude is not

commendable. Confessing one's transgressions openly [F.246.a] and declaring them without any lapse of time is commendable, while concealing one's transgressions is not commendable. Acknowledging one's own mistakes is commendable, while seeking out the faults of others is not commendable. Being grateful, being appreciative, being thankful, and repaying others' kindness is commendable, while not being grateful, not being appreciative, not being thankful, and not repaying others' kindness is not commendable.

1.28 "Becoming erudite is commendable, while mistaken learning is not commendable. Receiving the precepts without transgressing them is commendable, while receiving the precepts and then forsaking them is not commendable. Seeking out solitude and enjoying it is commendable, while enjoying socializing is not commendable. Sacrificing life and limb to stay in the wilderness is commendable, while being concerned for one's life and limb is not commendable. Delighting in the noble tradition and knowing moderation are commendable, while being insatiable and greedy and yearning for what is unwholesome are not commendable. Being patient and caring toward the weak is commendable, while denigrating others is not commendable. A pure livelihood is commendable, while being lazy is not commendable. Not forsaking those who have gone for refuge is commendable, while being hostile to those who have gone for refuge is not commendable. Not breaking one's promises and being true to one's word is commendable, while deceiving anyone is not commendable.

1.29 "Upholding the holy Dharma is commendable, while abandoning the holy Dharma is not commendable. The teacher who is not stingy with his learning, who does not withhold the Dharma, and who teaches the Dharma without concern for material possessions is commendable. The teacher who is stingy with the Dharma, who withholds the Dharma, and who teaches the Dharma with concern for worldly things is not commendable. [F.246.b] Attracting beings with the goal of fully ripening them is commendable, while the teacher who attracts beings without concern for them and without the goal of ripening them is not commendable. Pursuing the six perfections is commendable, while discordance with the six perfections is not commendable. Actions undertaken with knowledge are commendable, while actions undertaken with pride are not commendable. Associating¹¹ with close friends is commendable, while befriending evil people is not commendable. Following the path of the ten virtuous actions is commendable, while embarking on the path of the ten nonvirtuous actions is not commendable. Avoiding all unwholesome deeds is commendable, while engaging in any unwholesome deed is not commendable.

- 1.30 “Divine being, the going forth of those who hold reference points is not commendable, while the renunciation of those who espouse emptiness is commendable. Teaching the views of the lokāyatas from a lion throne is not commendable, while teaching the true Dharma of the Bodhisattva Collection from a lion throne is commendable. Partaking of gifts given out of faith while having flawed ethical discipline is not commendable, while any gain, praise, or laud for someone who observes ethical discipline is commendable. Knowledge endowed with special pride is not commendable, while communicating knowledge without special pride is commendable. Having malice toward bodhisattvas is not commendable, while having fondness for bodhisattvas as the only teachers is commendable. Pretending to be a bodhisattva in order to make a living is not commendable, while the profit of a bodhisattva committed to the authentic preaching of the Dharma is commendable. Divine being, in those ways, anything that contradicts the words of the Thus-Gone One is not commendable. Likewise, anything that accords with the words of the Thus-Gone One is commendable.” [F.247.a]
- 1.31 “Mañjuśrī, do you exert yourself in what is commendable, or in what is not commendable?” asked the god.
 “Divine being, I do not exert myself in what is commendable, nor do I exert myself in what is not commendable,” replied Mañjuśrī. “Why is that? Divine being, I do not exert myself in any phenomenon.”
- 1.32 “Mañjuśrī, do you not strive for commendable qualities?” asked the god.
 “Divine being, I do not exert myself in virtuous phenomena, nor do I exert myself in nonvirtuous phenomena,” replied Mañjuśrī. “Why is that? Divine being, *virtue* is conditioned. *Nonvirtue* is conditioned. *Immovability*¹² is conditioned as well.”
- 1.33 “Mañjuśrī, are you unconditioned?” asked the god.
 “Divine being, if seen from the perspective of being afraid of the conditioned, I am unconditioned,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.34 “Mañjuśrī, are you not afraid of the conditioned?” asked the god.
 “Divine being, if I saw a conditioned thing that truly existed, then I would be afraid of the conditioned,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.35 “Mañjuśrī, have you not seen a conditioned thing that truly existed?” asked the god.
 “Divine being, I have not seen a conditioned thing that truly existed, nor have I seen such an unconditioned thing that truly existed,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.36 “Mañjuśrī, are you conditioned or unconditioned?” asked the god.
 “Divine being, I am neither conditioned nor unconditioned,” replied Mañjuśrī. “Why is that? If I were conditioned, I would be like all the childish, ordinary beings. If I were unconditioned, I would be like all the hearers and

solitary buddhas.”

1.37 “Mañjuśrī, if you cannot be classified as either conditioned [F.247.b] or unconditioned, how should you be understood?” asked the god.

Mañjuśrī replied, “Divine being, what do you think? Is an emanation of the Thus-Gone One to be considered as conditioned or unconditioned?”

“Mañjuśrī,” said the god, “an emanation of the Thus-Gone One is not considered as conditioned, nor is it considered as unconditioned.”

1.38 Mañjuśrī then said, “Divine being, just as you understand the nature of the Thus-Gone One’s emanations, so should you understand me. Divine being, tell me, where does the consciousness of the Thus-Gone One abide? Is it in form?”

“No.”

“Does it abide in feeling, perception, or formations?”

“No.”

1.39 “Does it abide in the conditioned?”

“No.”

“Does it abide in the unconditioned?”

“No.”

1.40 “Where does the Thus-Gone One’s consciousness abide?”

“Mañjuśrī, the Thus-Gone One’s consciousness does not abide anywhere at all.”

“Divine being,” said Mañjuśrī, “you should understand that wherever the consciousness of the Thus-Gone One abides, there I abide.”

1.41 The god then asked, “Mañjuśrī, are you a thus-gone one?”

Mañjuśrī replied, “Suchness has neither coming nor going. That is the way I go and the way a thus-gone one goes. Therefore, I am a thus-gone one. I also come in the same way as suchness. Therefore, I am a thus-gone one. I also abide in the same way as suchness. Therefore, I am a thus-gone one. Divine being, *Mañjuśrī* is just like suchness. Therefore, I am a thus-gone one. Since suchness is beyond concepts and peaceful, Mañjuśrī is also beyond concepts and peaceful. Therefore, I am a thus-gone one.”

1.42 “Mañjuśrī, where should I search for suchness?” asked the god. [F.248.a]

“Divine being, look for suchness in the sixty-two wrong views,”¹³ replied Mañjuśrī.

1.43 “Where should I look for the sixty-two wrong views?” asked the god.

“Divine being, you should look for the sixty-two wrong views in the Thus-Gone One’s liberation, which has the character of imperturbability,” replied Mañjuśrī.

1.44 “Mañjuśrī, where should I look for the Thus-Gone One’s liberation?” asked the god.

- “Divine being, you should look for the Thus-Gone One’s liberation in the mental states and thoughts of all beings,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.45 “Mañjuśrī, where should I look for all beings’ mental states and thoughts?” asked the god.
- “Divine being, in the experience of the buddhas,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.46 “Mañjuśrī, where should I look for the experience of the buddhas?” asked the god.
- “Divine being, you must search for this within the knowledge of the greater and lesser faculties of beings,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.47 “Mañjuśrī, how would you explain this in terms of lesser knowledge?” asked the god.
- “Divine being, no one is able to understand or cognize the wisdom of a buddha,” replied Mañjuśrī. “Why is that? Divine being, the wisdom of a buddha is unobstructed, beyond thinking, inexpressible, inexplicable, without engagement, and beyond words. It is separate from mind, mental faculty, and cognition. Therefore, no one could possibly understand or cognize it.”
- 1.48 “Mañjuśrī, if the wisdom of a buddha cannot be understood, how can hearers gain knowledge? How can bodhisattvas achieve the state of nonregression?” asked the god.
- “Divine being,” replied Mañjuśrī, “the teaching of wisdom in words is the skillful means of the thus-gone ones. This wisdom is without words. [F.248.b] Divine being, fire does not arise from rubbing fire. Rather, fire arises from rubbing kindling sticks together. Divine being, just as in that analogy, if the thus-gone ones were to teach the vast wisdom of a buddha in full from the very beginning, then no one at all would comprehend the thus-gone ones’ wisdom. Therefore, the thus-gone ones make use of verbal teachings that are like kindling sticks to teach wisdom. Yet the wisdom itself is without words.”
- 1.49 “Mañjuśrī, what are these verbal teachings that are like kindling sticks like?” asked the god.
- “Divine being, anything that is appropriate,” replied Mañjuśrī. “They can be teachings on vows and having few belongings, teachings on practicing the perfections, or teachings pertaining to the factors of awakening. These are known as *teachings that are like kindling sticks*.”
- 1.50 “Mañjuśrī, what teachings are not teachings that are like kindling sticks?” asked the god.
- “Divine being,” replied Mañjuśrī, “teachings that are not about birth, destruction, or remaining; teachings that do not induce or exclude; teachings that do not explain affliction; teachings that do not cover the benefits of purification; teachings that do not inspire revulsion for saṃsāra; teachings that do not cause delight in nirvāṇa; teachings that are not for the sake of

knowledge, abandonment, cultivation, or actualization; and teachings that are not for the sake of attainment or realization. Divine being, those are pure,¹⁴ meaningful teachings.”

1.51 The god then said, “Mañjuśrī, when you give advice like this, Māra will surely not come to create confusion. How wonderful!”

1.52 No sooner had he spoken than the Evil One, Māra, manifested as a giant storm cloud in the sky above that thundered with a loud roar. The entire assembly became frightened and thought, “Who roared like that?”

1.53 Then the Blessed One said [F.249.a] to youthful Mañjuśrī, “Mañjuśrī, do you see the manifestation of the Evil One, Māra?”

“Blessed One, I see it,” replied Mañjuśrī. “Well-Gone One, I see it.”

1.54 Just then youthful Mañjuśrī ensnared the evil Māra with tight bonds. Māra, worried that he was going to fall down to earth, cried out, “I have been tied too tightly! I have been tied too tightly!”

“Evil One, there are other bonds that are far tighter than these,” replied Mañjuśrī. “Although you have always been bound by them, you have not realized it. What are they? They are the bond of the prideful thought ‘I am,’ the bond of misconception, and the bonds of craving and views. Evil Māra, those are far tighter bonds than the ones in which I have now ensnared you. Although they have always bound you, you have not realized it.”

1.55 Māra responded, “Mañjuśrī, let me go! I will return to my abode. I will not commit any demonic acts.”

“Evil One,” replied Mañjuśrī, “if you are meant to do the work of the Buddha, why would I let you go?”

1.56 Māra responded, “Mañjuśrī, I am here to cause obstacles to the teachings of the Buddha, so how could I do the work of the Buddha?”

Mañjuśrī then said, “Evil One, to cause a māra to engage in the work of a buddha is a manifestation of the bodhisattvas’ skills and knowledge. A buddha who performs buddha activity is not remarkable. A māra who performs buddha activity is truly amazing.” Having said this, youthful Mañjuśrī transformed the evil Māra so that he obtained the appearance of a buddha, sat on the lion throne of a buddha, and had the eloquence of a buddha.

Then the evil Māra said, “Venerable ones, ask me anything you wish. [F.249.b] I will then answer and put your minds at ease.”

1.57 The elder Mahākāśyapa inquired of the evil Māra, “Evil One, what are the bonds of a monk practitioner?”

Māra replied, “Venerable Mahākāśyapa, relishing the experience of concentration is a bond of a monk practitioner. Also, attachment to tranquility, practicing attainment in the sense source of neither perception

nor nonperception, perceiving an essence in emptiness, perceiving wrong views as something to eradicate, perceiving an essence in the absence of marks, perceiving marks as something to eradicate, perceiving an essence in the absence of wishes, perceiving wishes as something to eradicate, perceiving an essence in nirvāṇa, and perceiving saṃsāra as something to eradicate—these are the bonds of a monk practitioner, Venerable Mahākāśyapa.

1.58 “Why is that? Venerable Mahākāśyapa, emptiness is not something that must be cultivated once views have been eradicated—rather, wrong views are themselves emptiness. The absence of marks is not something that must be cultivated once marks have been eradicated—rather, the very essence of marks is the absence of marks. The absence of wishes is not something to be cultivated once wishes have been eradicated—rather, the very essence of wishes is the absence of wishes. Nirvāṇa is not something that must be cultivated once saṃsāra has been eradicated—rather, the very apprehension of saṃsāra is nirvāṇa. Venerable Mahākāśyapa, *nirvāṇa* does not partake of any notions, assumptions, or apprehension of marks. Nirvāṇa is nothing other than birth, destruction, and exhaustion—and yet, nonorigination is itself, by nature, nirvāṇa.”

1.59 When this teaching was given, five hundred monks had their minds liberated from defilements, with no further appropriation.

1.60 The elder Subhūti addressed those monks, [F.250.a] saying, “Noble ones, who has trained you?”

The monks responded, “One who has no attainment and no complete awakening.”

1.61 “What is that training like?” asked Subhūti.

The monks replied, “There is no guidance aimed at the abiding nature, yet there is also no absence of such guidance; it is known, just as it is. There is neither producing nor obstructing it; things are known to be sameness.”

When those monks gave that teaching, twelve hundred gods purified the Dharma eye regarding phenomena, so that it became clear and immaculate.

1.62 Elder Subhūti then inquired of evil Māra, “Evil One, what monks are worthy of generosity?”

Māra replied, “Venerable Subhūti, those monks who do not receive or accept anything, but sustain themselves exclusively on faith and devotion. Venerable Subhūti, monks are worthy of generosity when they regard themselves, the recipient monks, as illusions, and the offering as a hallucination, and they partake of it with neither grasping nor the absence of grasping.”

1.63 Śāradvatīputra then inquired, “Evil One, what is the Blessed One’s teaching on the imperturbable absorption?”

Māra replied, “It is the absorption by which bodhisattvas do not bring even exhaustion to exhaustion, since it is entirely exhausted. Likewise, they do not produce even the unborn, since it is naturally unborn; nor do they invoke an experience of even the absence of experience, for they know all phenomena to be naturally attained. Knowing this, they reach the attainment in which all feelings are the attainment of cessation and are seen to be sameness. In this there is nothing whatsoever to be seen, nor is there anything that is not seen. This is the Blessed One’s teaching on the imperturbable absorption.”

1.64 Maudgalyāyana then inquired, “Evil One, how do monks attain power over all mind states?”

Māra replied, “Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana, [F.250.b] this occurs when monks understand all phenomena to have the characteristics of the liberated mind, without being attached to the characteristics of liberation. It occurs when they know that the mind is primordially liberated and beyond bondage and liberation. It occurs when they know that all phenomena are without form, because the mind is without form. It occurs when they see that all phenomena do not abide, because the mind does not abide. It occurs when they know that all phenomena cannot be grasped, because the mind cannot be grasped. And yet, even as there is no knowing the mind by means of the mind, it occurs when they know the essential nature of the realm of phenomena by means of the essential nature of the mind. It occurs when they attain the power of independence by means of the essential nature of the realm of phenomena. This is also the attainment of the miraculous powers of intention. Reverend Mahāmaudgalyāyana, monks like this have power over all mind states.”

1.65 Pūrṇa then inquired, “Evil One, how do monks teach the Dharma purely?”

Māra replied, “Venerable Pūrṇa, monks do so by not being attached to any notions of *other* or *not other*, even though they know all phenomena from each other. They do so by teaching that all phenomena are projections, and by understanding that all forms of syllables, speech, voices, and words are like echoes. They do so by seeing all those who listen to the Dharma as illusory beings, and by seeing the manifestations of their bodies to be like the moon reflected in water. They do so by knowing that all afflictions arise from superimpositions. They do so by not teaching the Dharma for the sake of possessing, discarding, avoiding, or obtaining anything. They do so without any hope of attaining mastery of the four types of correct understanding, and without any hope for approval. They do so by teaching the Dharma without asking for material possessions, and by knowing that, since their

own minds are intrinsically pure, the minds of all beings are also intrinsically pure. Knowing that the mind is intrinsically pure, they see the māra of the aggregates as void. [F.251.a] They perceive the māra of the afflictions to be fabricated. They know that the māra of the Lord of Death is unborn and beyond birth. With regard to the māra of the gods, these monks are unshakable and free of all assumptions. Monks like this are pure teachers of the Dharma.”

1.66 Upāli then inquired, “Evil One, how do monks uphold the Vinaya?”

Māra replied, “Venerable Upāli, when monks know all phenomena to be fully tamed, they understand that the limit of the beginning of transgression is identical with the limit of disengagement. They clear away their remorse over the arising of faults and are no longer so strict. Since they can overcome even the acts with immediate retribution, there is no need to mention minor wrongdoing related to behavior and discipline. As such, they accomplish proper Dharma conduct. They are experts at taming the afflictions. They perceive that temporary afflictions are not defiled, and that they arise. They do not teach afflictions as being inside, outside, or neither. They know that such an understanding of the afflictions is to know their nonexistence, so they do not try to eliminate them or make them disappear. Rather, they know all afflictions to be like clouds, in that they use the wind of wisdom and special insight to scatter them in a way that they do not go anywhere or to any place, nor do they remain. They know that afflictions are like the moon in water, in that they show their faces through the reflections of superimpositions. They know that afflictions are like a dark realm, such that they use the lantern of wisdom to illuminate the darkness. They know that afflictions are like thieves, *ḍākinīs*, *yakṣas*, and *rākṣasas*, in that if one investigates properly, they do not remain. They know that afflictions always exploit our vulnerabilities, in that they proliferate with improper mental engagement. [F.251.b] They know that, through the knowledge of emptiness, the absence of marks, and the absence of wishes, one prevents afflictions from entering the mind. Thus, whoever knows afflictions to be as such has compassion for beings tormented by afflictions, and they clearly perceive that there is no self and no being. When this has occurred, they are known as true upholders of the Vinaya.”

1.67 In this way, all the great hearers asked evil Māra the questions they wished, and evil Māra answered all of them conclusively, setting their minds at ease.

1.68 Present in the assembly at that time was the god *Susīma*, who asked the evil Māra, “Evil One, youthful *Mañjuśrī* spoke about the workings of Māra in relation to the bodhisattvas, but would you please also clarify? Evil One, what are the workings of Māra for the bodhisattvas?”

The Evil One replied to the god Susīma, “Divine being, there are twenty particularly severe workings of Māra for the bodhisattvas. What are those twenty? (1) Pleasing, serving, and venerating those practitioners who seek liberation and fear saṃsāra are the workings of Māra. (2) Contemplating emptiness, yet forsaking beings, is the working of Māra. (3) Contemplating the unconditioned, yet being weary of conditioned roots of virtue, is the working of Māra. (4) Generating concentration, yet attempting to turn away from concentration, is the working of Māra. (5) Teaching the Dharma, yet not having great compassion for the audience, is also the working of Māra. (6) Searching for those who have qualities and who are worthy of generosity, while harboring anger toward those who are immoral, is the working of Māra. (7) Teaching the discourses of the hearers and solitary buddhas, while concealing the teachings of the Great Vehicle, is the working of Māra. (8) Hiding the profound discourses, while teaching various other topics, is the working of Māra. (9) Knowing the path of the bodhisattvas, [F.252.a] yet not striving on the path of the perfections, is also the working of Māra. (10) Praising those who are particularly diligent, while not coaxing beings who are not diligent, is also the working of Māra. (11) Not actualizing the mind of awakening, despite having accumulated roots of virtue, is also the working of Māra. (12) Preventing others from grasping special insight, despite practicing special insight oneself, is also the working of Māra. (13) Seeking to terminate afflictions entirely, while aspiring for the afflictions in the continuation of saṃsāra, is also the working of Māra. (14) Using insight for analysis, while not maintaining one’s focus on great compassion, is also the working of Māra. (15) Any virtuous act that is performed unskillfully is also the working of Māra. (16) Not seeking the bodhisattva teachings, but rather, receiving the secret words of the lokāyatas, is also the working of Māra. (17) Being learned, yet being unwilling to share the Dharma out of anxiety that others will become learned, is also the working of Māra. (18) Working on worldly affairs without seeking erudition is also the working of Māra. (19) Failing to follow, serve, and venerate fellow bodhisattva Dharma teachers who practice the Great Vehicle, while delighting in dissimilar teachers who practice the vehicles of the hearers and solitary buddhas, is also the working of Māra. (20) When one has attained the greatness of resources, wealth, jewels, and power of Śakra, Brahmā, a world protector, a king, a merchant,¹⁵ or a householder, it is also the working of Māra if one abstains from following, serving, and venerating those endowed with the greatness of the Dharma. Divine being, these are the twenty particularly severe workings of Māra for the bodhisattvas.”

1.69 Then the Blessed One praised the evil Māra: “Evil One, you have explained the workings of Māra for the bodhisattvas very well—excellent! Bodhisattvas who hear about these workings of Māra and subsequently abandon them [F.252.b] will attain twenty qualities that ripen awakening. What are those twenty? They are (1) great kindness, (2) great compassion, (3) not being weary of saṃsāra, (4) being accepted by a spiritual friend, (5) encountering buddhas, (6) hearing about the perfections, (7) taking part in the assembly of bodhisattvas, (8) attaining dhāraṇī, (9) attaining perfect eloquence, (10) realizing the superknowledges, (11) receiving teachings one has not heard, (12) manifesting the mind of awakening in life after life, (13) always taking ordination without interruption, (14) having all the freedoms, (15) accomplishing teachings exactly as they were heard, (16) using the knowledge of skillful means and wisdom to attract beings and accept them, (17) upholding the true Dharma, (18) being honest and nondeceptive, (19) abandoning all beloved things, and (20) not having anger toward any being. They will attain these twenty qualities that ripen awakening.”

1.70 The god Susīma then said to the evil Māra, “Evil One, the Blessed One gave his approval to you. Evil One, you have obtained a great boon.”

Māra said, “Divine being, I did not obtain any boon! Why do I say this? Divine being, by way of analogy, the display of a person possessed by a spirit is regarded as the expression of the spirit, not of the person. Divine being, in that same way, I am teaching due to the blessings of Mañjuśrī; this should not be seen as my own doing.”

1.71 The god replied, “Evil One, you have the marks of a buddha’s body, you sit on a buddha’s lion throne, and you teach the Dharma with a buddha’s eloquence. So are you not happy?”

Māra responded, “Although you see me as being ornamented, I know that I am tied with tight bonds.”

1.72 “Evil One,” said the god, [F.253.a] “ask youthful Mañjuśrī for forgiveness, and he will release you.”

Then, by Mañjuśrī’s blessings, Māra replied to the god Susīma, “Divine being, one does not need to ask the bodhisattva great beings who have entered the Great Vehicle for forgiveness. Why is that? Because they are undisturbed and without anger. One needs to ask for forgiveness from individuals who are disturbed and angry.”

1.73 The god inquired, “Evil One, what is the patience of the bodhisattvas like?”

“Divine being,” replied Māra, “the patience of the bodhisattvas has twelve aspects. What are those twelve? It is intentional patience, because it is not artificial. It is altruistic patience, because it is without anger. It is honest patience, because it deceives no one. It is kind and compassionate patience,

because it protects the poor and needy. It is patience in which actions are consistent with words, because it does not regress. It is a patience of emptiness, because it is free of views. It is a patience of confidence in the Dharma, because it is grounded in reality. It is profound patience, because it is selfless. It is appropriate patience, because it emulates the noble ones. It is true patience, because it is in harmony with dependent origination. It is a patience that is free from conformity and antagonism, because it safeguards all beings. It is an unborn and nonarising patience, because bodhisattvas have achieved acceptance that phenomena are unborn. Divine being, these are the twelve aspects of the bodhisattvas' patience."

- 1.74 The god then asked, "Evil One, if you were released, would you be happy?"
 "Divine being, I would be happy—exhilarated!" replied Māra.
- 1.75 So the god Susīma said to youthful Mañjuśrī, "Mañjuśrī, please release the evil Māra, so that he can return to his home."
 Youthful Mañjuśrī [F.253.b] then asked the evil Māra, "Evil One, who bound you? From what will you be released?"
 "Mañjuśrī, I do not know who bound me," replied Māra.
- 1.76 Mañjuśrī then said, "Evil One, just as you think you are bound when you are not, so all childish beings perceive the impermanent to be permanent, the painful to be pleasant, the selfless to be a self, the repulsive to be beautiful, the absence of form to be form, and the absence of feeling, perception, formation, and consciousness to be feeling, perception, formation, and consciousness. Evil One, if I free you, from what would you be freed?"
 "I would not be freed from anything," replied Māra.
- 1.77 "Evil One, in the same way, aside from understanding their mistaken perception, those who are liberated are not liberated from anything whatsoever. Thus, it is said they are liberated through understanding."
 At this point, youthful Mañjuśrī withdrew his blessing, so that the Evil One reassumed his own appearance.
- 1.78 The elder Mahākāśyapa then said to the evil Māra, "Excellent, Evil One—excellent! You have performed the deeds of a buddha!"
 Māra replied, "Venerable Mahākāśyapa, this is not my doing. It is the work of youthful Mañjuśrī."
- 1.79 The god Susīma then inquired of youthful Mañjuśrī, "Mañjuśrī, where should one seek the deeds of a buddha?"
 "Divine being, one should seek the deeds of a buddha in the afflictions of all beings," replied Mañjuśrī. "Why is that? Because if beings were not stricken with afflictions, the buddhas would have nothing to do. Divine

- being, [F.254.a] by way of analogy, if beings did not fall sick, there would be nothing left for doctors to do. Divine being, likewise, if beings were not stricken with afflictions, there would be nothing for the buddhas to do.”
- 1.80 “Mañjuśrī, what must happen for a buddha to appear?” asked the god.
 “Divine being, if there is birth, old age, sickness, and death, a buddha will appear,” replied Mañjuśrī. “Why is that? Because the blessed buddhas appear for the sake of eliminating them.”
- 1.81 “Mañjuśrī, once a thus-gone one has found awakening, what does he create? What does he prevent?” asked the god.
 “Divine being, once a thus-gone one has found awakening, he does not create anything, nor does he prevent anything,” replied Mañjuśrī. “Why is that? Because, divine being, all phenomena are unborn and unceasing. Divine being, *the appearance of a buddha* is just an epithet for the unborn inherent nature of things.”
- 1.82 “Mañjuśrī, how are bodhisattvas perfect in their intentions?” asked the god.
 “By not engaging with any phenomenon by means of a view of observation,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.83 “How are they perfect in their altruistic intent?” asked the god.
 “They are not attached to any inner or outer phenomenon whatsoever,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.84 “How are bodhisattvas perfect in their generosity?” asked the god.
 “They have cast off all afflictions, but do not abandon any being,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.85 “How are bodhisattvas perfect in their discipline?” asked the god.
 “They practice just as the teacher taught. They establish beings in discipline and, because of their altruistic intentions, [F.254.b] they do not abandon the mind of awakening,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.86 “How are bodhisattvas perfect in their patience?” asked the god.
 “Understanding that all phenomena have the characteristic of destruction, they do not relinquish their omniscient dispositions in order to eliminate beings’ malice, anger, and aggression,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.87 “How are bodhisattvas perfect in their diligence?” asked the god.
 “Bodhisattvas do not give special regard only to achieving the object of their efforts, namely, unexcelled and perfect awakening, but also persist with diligence in order to rid all beings of laziness,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.88 “How are bodhisattvas perfect in their concentration?” asked the god.
 “Despite knowing that all phenomena are intrinsically in a state of equanimity, they still practice concentration in order to tame the afflictions of all beings,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.89 “How are bodhisattvas perfect in their insight?” asked the god.

- “When, having attained stillness, they are free of all conceptual elaboration, yet they still engage in analytical insight for the sake of ridding all beings of their views. At that time, bodhisattvas are perfect in their insight,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.90 “How do bodhisattvas abide in loving kindness?” asked the god.
 “When they see all phenomena as being nirvāṇa by nature,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.91 “How do bodhisattvas abide in compassion?” asked the god.
 “When they understand that the results of actions do not exist with regard to any phenomenon,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.92 “How do bodhisattvas remain in joy?” asked the god. [F.255.a]
 “When they do not feel any joy or sorrow about any phenomenon,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.93 “How do bodhisattvas remain in equanimity?” asked the god.
 “When they have become free of duality with regard to all phenomena,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.94 “How are bodhisattvas known as authentic bodhisattvas?” asked the god.
 “When they know that all phenomena are unarisen, like illusions,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.95 “How are bodhisattvas great beings?” asked the god.
 “When bodhisattvas see that all phenomena are selfless,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.96 “How are bodhisattvas supreme beings?” asked the god.
 “When they know that all phenomena are ungraspable and groundless,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.97 “How have bodhisattvas donned the great armor?” asked the god.
 “When they hear that all phenomena are as vast as the sky without trembling or being scared or terrified, and without abandoning the great armor,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.98 “How are bodhisattvas gentle?” asked the god.
 “When, out of great compassion, they do not distance themselves from beings, but are not overly close through habitual attachment,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.99 “How are bodhisattvas easy to be with?” asked the god.
 “When they do no harm to others with body, speech, or mind, since they do not apprehend self or other,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.100 “How are bodhisattvas well-spoken?” asked the god.
 “When they accomplish the teachings as they learned them [F.255.b] and practice what they preach,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.101 “How do bodhisattvas act in accordance with the advice they have received?” asked the god.

- “When they fully grasp their own minds, and therefore do not transgress the directive of any being and remain on good terms with all beings,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.102 “How are bodhisattvas perfect in their modesty and decorum?” asked the god.
“When, in order to ripen all beings, they are peaceful inwardly while moving about outwardly,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.103 “How are bodhisattvas endowed with faith?” asked the god.
“When they enjoy all desirable things without craving them,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.104 “How are bodhisattvas stable companions?” asked the god.
“When they do not interrupt the lineage of the buddhas,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.105 “How are bodhisattvas grateful?” asked the god.
“When they do not squander the roots of virtue performed,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.106 “How are bodhisattvas appreciative?” asked the god.
“When they do not long for other vehicles,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.107 “How do bodhisattvas have few desires?” asked the god.
“When they do not desire their own afflictions while also wishing to relinquish the afflictions of all beings,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.108 “How are bodhisattvas content?”¹⁶ asked the god.
“When, through knowledge of the noble ones’ insight, they do not appropriate any phenomenon,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.109 “How are bodhisattvas satisfied?” asked the god. [F.256.a]
“When they abide in transcendent insight, yet wander the world in order to mature others,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.110 “How are bodhisattvas fully disengaged?” asked the god.
“When they are not afflicted by any affliction, yet still appear to strive to eradicate the afflictions of all beings,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.111 “How are bodhisattvas free and independent?” asked the god.
“When they appear in all buddha fields with an undefiled body, thus mastering wisdom without being governed by afflictions,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.112 “How do bodhisattvas become erudite?” asked the god.
“When they listen to teachings they have not previously heard and cause others to hear new teachings,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.113 “How do bodhisattvas properly exert themselves?” asked the god.
“When they neither conceptualize nor abstain from conceptualizing phenomena, knowing that they derive from all manner of observation,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.114 “How do bodhisattvas bring forth accomplishment?” asked the god.

“When they do not give rise to ideas in relation to others, and understand the mind states of all beings to be void, while they also do not believe in their own mind states, and do not bring forth accomplishment based on notions of self and other,” replied Mañjuśrī.

1.115 “Mañjuśrī, how are bodhisattvas perfect in recall and eloquence?” asked the god.

“Divine being,” replied Mañjuśrī, “when they retain all that they have learned, yet by disclosing it impartially according to the faculties of all beings, [F.256.b] and knowing that language is like an echo, they do not cling to it. That is how the bodhisattvas are perfect in recall and eloquence.”

1.116 Then the god Great Light inquired of youthful Mañjuśrī, “Mañjuśrī, who will understand the meaning of what you have taught?”

“Divine being,” replied Mañjuśrī, “those who have been accepted by a spiritual friend, who have excellent former connections, who have produced roots of virtue, and who partake in the state free of observation will understand the meaning of what I have taught.”

1.117 “What will they be inclined toward? What will their attitude be?” asked the god.

“They will be inclined toward the profound. Their attitude will be without special pride,” replied Mañjuśrī.

1.118 “Mañjuśrī, how are monks without special pride?” asked the god.

“Divine being,” replied Mañjuśrī, “when monks train in the belief in the transitory collection as being by its very nature the path of the single vehicle. When, by means of nonduality, they come to understand that the essence of the belief in the transitory collection is the same as the essence of the path of the single vehicle. When they search for what derives from ignorance, existence, and craving, but in considering what derives from ignorance, existence, and craving, they understand that the very essence of ignorance, existence, and craving is knowledge and liberation. This is how monks are without special pride.

1.119 “Moreover, divine being, it is also when monks understand that the extreme of attachment is the same as the extreme of freedom from attachment, and when they understand that the nature of the extreme of freedom from attachment is attachment. It is also when monks understand that the extreme of anger is the same as the extreme of freedom from anger, and that the nature of the extreme of freedom from anger is anger. It is also when they understand that the extreme of delusion is the same as the extreme of freedom from delusion, [F.257.a] and that the nature of the extreme of freedom from delusion is delusion. This is how monks are without special pride.

- 1.120 “Moreover, divine being, it is also when monks neither understand suffering, nor reject its origin, nor actualize cessation, nor cultivate the path, but by knowing that suffering is unborn, they come to understand the four truths of the noble ones. Knowing that suffering is unborn, it has no origin. Knowing that suffering is unborn, it has no cessation. Knowing that suffering is unborn, there is also no path. In that way, monks who properly exert themselves do not create anything, nor do they cause anything to cease or remain. Whatever is unborn, unceasing, and nonabiding is unconditioned. Such monks, therefore, cultivate the unconditioned nature, which is also the truth of the noble ones. Divine being, this is how monks are without special pride.”
- 1.121 Then, the evil Māra, suffering and unhappy, burst into tears and sobbed, “Wherever this Dharma teaching is delivered, the māras will stand no chance. Those who retain this teaching will prevent any actions of Māra from affecting them.” Having said that, the evil Māra felt sad and unhappy. Dejected, he disappeared at that very moment.
- 1.122 The god Great Light now addressed youthful Mañjuśrī: “Mañjuśrī, as I have understood what you have taught, any monk who hears this profound way of being free of special pride and rejects it will no longer be a monk or ordained. The teacher of such householders, who are frightened by this supremely profound way of being free of special pride, is not the Thus-Gone One. [F.257.b] Any monk, nun, upāsaka, or upāsikā who hears this supremely profound way of being free of special pride without being afraid, terrified, or frightened, but rather trusts it, should be recognized as liberated.”
- 1.123 Then the Blessed One addressed the god Great Light: “Divine being, that is correct. It is as you said. Those monks, nuns, upāsakas, and upāsikās who hear this supremely profound way of being free of special pride without being afraid, terrified, or frightened, but rather trust it, should be recognized as liberated. Why is that? It is because by accepting this teaching, I prophesy that those bodhisattvas will attain unexcelled and perfect awakening. Moreover, by accepting this teaching, any hearer or solitary buddha will attain deliverance.”
- 1.124 The god Great Light asked, “Blessed One, what is the name of this Dharma teaching? How should it be known?”
- The Blessed One replied, “Divine being, you should know this teaching as *The Chapter on Mañjuśrī’s Magical Display*. It should also be known as *The Chapter on Taming Māra*.”

- 1.125 After the Blessed One had given these teachings, youthful Mañjuśrī, the god Great Light, the entire assembly, and the world with its gods, humans, asuras, and gandharvas rejoiced and praised the Blessed One's words.
- 1.126 *This concludes the Noble Great Vehicle Sūtra "The Chapter on Mañjuśrī's Magical Display."*

c.

Colophon

- c.1 Translated, edited, emended according to the new terminological register, and finalized by the Indian preceptors Śīlendrabodhi and Jinamitra, as well as the chief editor-translator, Bandé Yeshé Dé.

ab.

ABBREVIATIONS

C Choné

H Lhasa (Zhol)

K Peking edition of 1684/92 (Kangxi)

K_Y Yongle

L London (Shelkar)

N Narthang

S Stok Palace manuscript

n.

NOTES

- n.1 The Sanskrit title of this text varies between two alternatives across the Tibetan versions. Most attest to *Mañjuśrīvikurvāṇaparivarta* while some give *Mañjuśrīvitaparivarta*. The latter title appears in the Stok, Ulaanbaatar, Shey, Hemis, Phukdrak, Namgyal, Chizhi, Dongkarla, Gangteng, and Neyphug Kangyurs and the Basgo fragments, while the former title appears in the rest.
- n.2 The order of the sūtras varies across the different Kangyurs. *The Magical Display of Mañjuśrī* is placed among the first texts of the General Sūtra section in Kangyurs related to the Degé, while it appears later in some other Kangyurs.
- n.3 *blo gros mi zad pas bstan pa rgya cher 'grel pa*.
- n.4 The sūtra is quoted in the text *bstan bcos lung gi nyi 'od* (Sönam Rinchen 1998, folio 30.a).
- n.5 The sūtra is quoted in the text *yid bzhin rin po che'i mdzod kyi dka' gnad*. (Drimé Özer 1999, folio 16.a).
- n.6 For an English translation of Toh 96, see Braarvig, Jens (tr.) *The Play of Mañjuśrī* (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh96.html>) (2020). For one example of the confusion of the two texts, see Jñānavajra's commentary on the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* in the Tengyur (Toh 4019), folio 121.a, where a passage cited as being from this text, *The Chapter on Mañjuśrī's Magical Display*, is in fact from *The Play of Mañjuśrī* (1.195 (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh96.html#UT22084-046-002-360>)).
- n.7 佛說魔逆經 (*Foshuo moni jing*).
- n.8 For more on Dharmarakṣa, see Boucher 2006.

- n.9 佛說四天王經 (*Foshuo si tianwang jing*).
- n.10 Denkarma, folio 298.b.2. See also Herrmann-Pfandt 2008, 84, no. 154.
- n.11 Reading *bsten pa* here from K and N in place of *brtan pa*.
- n.12 This is a standard set of three terms characterizing actions and their karmic consequences: virtuous, nonvirtuous, and unmoving. This third term refers to acts that lead to rebirth in the formless realm and are so called because their result is unchangeable. See Edgerton's entry on *aniñjya* (p. 24) for further information.
- n.13 These are typically organized into two general groups: 18 views that are based on the assertion of the past and 44 views based on the assertion of the future. The first group includes assertions such as the permanence of the self and the world, impermanence, nihilism, or eternalism, and the second group includes assertions of perception, nonperception, both, or neither, as well as assertions of nihilism or that this is nirvāṇa. See also Nordrang Orgyen 2008, 3578.
- n.14 Reading *dag pa* from K_Y, K, S.
- n.15 Reading *tshong* from K_Y, L, K, N, C, H.
- n.16 The text reads *cho ga shes pa*, "know the procedure/behavior." Since this makes little sense in the given context, and because of the easily confused orthography, we are emending it to *chog shes pa*, "content."

b.

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GLOSSARY

· Types of attestation for Sanskrit names and terms ·

AS	<i>Attested in source text</i> This term is attested in the Sanskrit manuscript used as a source for this translation.
AO	<i>Attested in other text</i> This term is attested in other Sanskrit manuscripts of the Kangyur or Tengyur.
AD	<i>Attested in dictionary</i> This term is attested in Tibetan-Sanskrit dictionaries.
AA	<i>Approximate attestation</i> The attestation of this name is approximate. It is based on other names where Tibetan-Sanskrit relationship is attested in dictionaries or other manuscripts.
RP	<i>Reconstruction from Tibetan phonetic rendering</i> This term is a reconstruction based on the Tibetan phonetic rendering of the term.
RS	<i>Reconstruction from Tibetan semantic rendering</i> This term is a reconstruction based on the semantics of the Tibetan translation.
SU	<i>Source Unspecified</i> This term has been supplied from an unspecified source, which most often is a widely trusted dictionary.

g.1 acceptance that phenomena are unborn

mi skye ba'i chos la bzod pa

མི་སྐྱེ་བའི་ཆོས་ལ་བཟོད་པ།

anutpattikadharmakṣānti

An attainment characteristic of the effortless and spontaneous wakefulness of the eighth ground of the bodhisattvas.

g.2 Anāthapiṇḍada

mgon med zas sbyin

མགོན་མེད་ཟས་སྤྱིན།

anāthapiṇḍada

An important benefactor of the Buddha who donated the Jeta Grove outside of Śrāvastī to the Buddhist community.

g.3 belief in the transitory collection

'jig tshogs la lta ba

འདིག་ཚོགས་ལ་ལྟ་བ།

satkāyadr̥ṣṭi

The mistaken view that identifies the self with the ultimately transient collection of mind and body.

g.4 Brahmā

tshangs pa

ཚངས་པ།

brahmā

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A high-ranking deity presiding over a divine world where other beings consider him the creator; he is also considered to be the lord of the Sahā world (our universe). Though not considered a creator god in Buddhism, Brahmā occupies an important place as one of two gods (the other being Indra/Śakra) said to have first exhorted the Buddha Śākyamuni to teach the Dharma. The particular heavens found in the form realm over which Brahmā rules are often some of the most sought-after realms of higher rebirth in Buddhist literature. Since there are many universes or world systems, there are also multiple Brahmās presiding over them. His most frequent epithets are “Lord of Sahā World” (*Sahāṃpati*) and Great Brahmā (*Mahābrahmā*).

g.5 ḍākinī

mkha' 'gro ma

མཁའ་འགྲོ་མ།

ḍākinī

A class of female deities.

g.6 dhāraṇī

gzungs

གཟུངས།

dhāraṇī

This term is used in various ways. In this case it appears to refer to the mental capacity of not forgetting. It is also very commonly used as a term for mystical verses similar to mantras, the usage of which will grant a particular power.

g.7 factors of awakening

byang chub kyi phyogs kyi chos

བྱང་ཆུབ་ཀྱི་ཕྱགས་ཀྱི་ཆོས།

bodhipakṣadharmā

The set of practices that lead to awakening, traditionally listed as thirty-seven.

g.8 five acts with immediate retribution

mtshams med lnga

མཚམས་མེད་ལྔ།

pañcānantarya

These are killing one's mother, father, or an arhat; drawing blood from a thus-gone one; or causing a schism in the sangha.

g.9 four types of correct understanding

so so yang dag par rig pa bzhi

སོ་སོ་ཡང་དག་པར་རིག་པ་བཞི།

catasraḥ pratisaṃvidāḥ · catuḥpratisaṃvid

Genuine discrimination with respect to phenomena, meaning, language, and eloquence.

g.10 Great Light

'od mang po

འོད་མང་པོ།

—

A divine being.

g.11 Hearer

nyan thos

ཉན་ཐོས།

śrāvaka

Someone who practices according to the Vehicle of the Hearers (“those who hear” the Buddha's teaching, i.e., his disciples). In a Mahāyāna context it refers to those disciples of the Buddha who aspire to attain the state of an arhat.

g.12 immediate retribution

mtshams med

མཚམས་མེད།

ānantarya

See “five acts with immediate retribution.”

g.13 Jeta Grove

rgyal bu rgyal byed kyi tshal

རྒྱལ་བུ་རྒྱལ་བྱེད་གྱི་ཚལ།

jetavana

The park donated to the Buddha by Anāthapiṇḍada.

g.14 Jinamitra

dzi na mi tra

ཇོ་ན་མི་ཏ།

jinamitra

An Indian *paṇḍita* resident in Tibet during the late eighth and early ninth centuries.

g.15 limit of reality

yang dag pa'i mtha'

ཡང་དག་པའི་མཐའ།

bhūtakoti

This term has three meanings: (1) the ultimate nature, (2) the experience of the ultimate nature, and (3) the quiescent state of a worthy one (*arhat*) to be avoided by bodhisattvas.

g.16 lokāyata

'jig rten rgyang phan pa

འཇིག་རྟེན་རྒྱང་ཕན་པ།

lokāyata

While this term is used a name for the ancient Indian school of materialist philosophy, it can also refer to non-Buddhists in general.

g.17 Mahākāśyapa

'od srung chen po

འོད་སྤྱང་ཆེན་པོ།

mahākāśyapa

One of the principal students of the Buddha, known for his ascetic practice.

g.18 Mañjuśrī

'jam dpal

འཇམ་དཔལ།

mañjuśrī

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Mañjuśrī is one of the “eight close sons of the Buddha” and a bodhisattva who embodies wisdom. He is a major figure in the Mahāyāna sūtras, appearing often as an interlocutor of the Buddha. In his most well-known iconographic form, he is portrayed bearing the sword of wisdom in his right hand and a volume of the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra* in his left. In addition to the epithet Kumārabhūta, which means “having a youthful form,” Mañjuśrī is also called Mañjughoṣa, Mañjusvara, and Pañcaśikha.

g.19 Māra

bdud

བདུད།

māra

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

(1) The demon who assailed Śākyamuni prior to his awakening. (2) The deities ruled over by Māra who do not wish any beings to escape from saṃsāra. (3) Any demonic force, the personification of conceptual and emotional obstacles. They are also symbolic of the defects within a person that prevent awakening. (*Provisional 84000 definition. New definition forthcoming.*)

g.20 māra of the afflictions

nyon mongs pa'i bdud

ཉོན་མོངས་པའི་བདུད།

kleśamāra

This is the figurative or embodied demon of emotional disturbances.

g.21 māra of the aggregates

phung po'i bdud

ཕུང་པོའི་བདུད།

skandhamāra

This is the figurative or embodied demon of the constituents in a being.

g.22 māra of the gods

lha'i bu'i bdud

ལྷའི་བུའི་བདུད།

devaputramāra

This is the figurative or embodied demon of pleasure.

g.23 māra of the Lord of Death

'chi bdag gi bdud

འཆི་བདག་གི་བདུད།

mṛtyumāra

This is the figurative or embodied demon of death.

g.24 Maudgalyāyana

maud gal gyi bu

མོད་གལ་གྱི་བུ།

maudgalyāyana

An elder monk in the Buddha's retinue, famous for his mastery of supranormal powers.

g.25 noble tradition

'phags pa'i rigs

འཕགས་པའི་རིགས།

āryavaṃśa

Being content with one's garments, food, and lodging and observing ethical behavior.

g.26 nonregression

phyir mi ldog pa

ཕྱིར་སྤོངས་པ།

avinivarta · avaiivartika

A stage on the bodhisattva path where the practitioner will never turn back, or be turned back, from progress toward the full awakening of a buddha.

g.27 Pūrṇa

gang po

གང་པོ།

pūrṇa

One of the closest disciples of the Buddha, famous for his ability to teach.

g.28 rākṣasa

srin po

སྲིན་པོ།

rākṣasa

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A class of nonhuman beings that are often, but certainly not always, considered demonic in the Buddhist tradition. They are often depicted as flesh-eating monsters who haunt frightening places and are ugly and evil-natured with a yearning for human flesh, and who additionally have miraculous powers, such as being able to change their appearance.

g.29 realm of phenomena

chos kyi dbyings

ཆོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས།

dharmadhātu

The element, or nature, of ultimate reality.

g.30 Śakra

brgya byin

བརྒྱ་བྱིན།

śakra

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The lord of the gods. Alternatively known as Indra, the deity that is called “lord of the gods” dwells on the summit of Mount Sumeru and wields the thunderbolt. The Tibetan translation *brgya byin* (meaning “one hundred sacrifices”) is based on an etymology that *śakra* is an abbreviation of *śata-*

kratu, one who has performed a hundred sacrifices. Each world with a central Sumeru has a Śakra. Also known by other names such as Kauśika, Devendra, and Śacipati.

g.31 Śāradvatīputra

sha ra dwa t'i bu

ཤ་ར་དྲ་ཌི་བུ།

śāradvatīputra

An elder monk in the Buddha's retinue, known for his pure observance of discipline and unparalleled knowledge of the teachings.

g.32 sense source

skye mched

སྐྱེ་མཆེད།

āyatana

One way of describing experience and the world in terms of twelve sense sources: eye and form, ear and sound, nose and odor, tongue and taste, body and touch, and mind and mental objects.

g.33 sense source of neither perception nor nonperception

'du shes med 'du shes med min skye mched

འདུ་ཤེས་མེད་འདུ་ཤེས་མེད་མིན་སྐྱེ་མཆེད།

naivasamjñānāsamjñāyatana

The highest of the four divine concentration realms in the formless realm, and the fourth of the four formless absorptions. The other three are infinite space, infinite consciousness, and nothingness.

g.34 Śīlendrabodhi

shI len dra bo dhi

ཤི་ལེན་དྲ་བོ་ནི།

śīlendrabodhi

An Indian *paṇḍita* resident in Tibet during the late eighth and early ninth centuries.

g.35 solitary buddha

rang sangs rgyas

རང་སངས་རྒྱས།

pratyekabuddha

An individual who, in their last life, attains liberation by realizing the nature of interdependent origination without relying upon a spiritual guide.

g.36 Śrāvastī

mnyan yod

སུན་ཡོད།

śrāvastī

The ancient Indian kingdom of Kosala.

g.37 Subhūti

rab 'byor

རབ་འབྱོར།

subhūti

One of the closest disciples of the Buddha, known for his profound understanding of emptiness.

g.38 superknowledges

mngon par shes pa

མངོན་པ་ཤེས་པ།

abhijñā

Supernormal cognitive powers possessed to different degrees by bodhisattvas and buddhas. The five superknowledges are clairvoyance, clairsentience, knowledge of others' minds, miraculous abilities, and knowledge of past lives; a sixth, mentioned in some lists and possessed only by fully awakened buddhas, is knowledge of the exhaustion of outflows.

g.39 Susīma

mtshams bzangs

མཚམས་བཟངས།

susīma

The name of a god.

g.40 ten nonvirtuous actions

mi dge ba bcu

མི་དགེ་བ་བཅུ།

daśakuśala

Killing, taking what is not given, sexual misconduct, lying, uttering divisive talk, speaking harsh words, gossiping, covetousness, ill will, and wrong views.

g.41 ten virtuous actions

dge ba bcu

དགེ་བ་བརྒྱ།

daśakuśala

Abstaining from the ten nonvirtuous actions. Namely, abstaining from killing, taking what is not given, sexual misconduct, lying, uttering divisive talk, speaking harsh words, gossiping, covetousness, ill will, and wrong views.

g.42 Upāli

nye bar 'khor

ཉེ་བར་འཁོར།

upāli

An elder monk in the Buddha's retinue, famous for his knowledge of monastic discipline (*vinaya*).

g.43 upāsaka

dge bsnyen

དགེ་བསྟེན།

upāsaka

Lay male devotees who uphold the five precepts.

g.44 upāsikā

dge bsnyen ma

དགེ་བསྟེན་མ།

upāsikā

Lay female devotees who uphold the five precepts.

g.45 world protector

'jig rten skyong ba

འཇིག་རྟེན་སྐྱོང་བ།

lokapāla

A group of four nonhuman beings who stand guard over the four directions.

g.46 yakṣa
gnod sbyin

གནོད་སྦྱིན།

yakṣa

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A class of nonhuman beings who inhabit forests, mountainous areas, and other natural spaces, or serve as guardians of villages and towns, and may be propitiated for health, wealth, protection, and other boons, or controlled through magic. According to tradition, their homeland is in the north, where they live under the jurisdiction of the Great King Vaiśravaṇa.

Several members of this class have been deified as gods of wealth (these include the just mentioned Vaiśravaṇa) or as bodhisattva generals of yakṣa armies, and have entered the Buddhist pantheon in a variety of forms, including, in tantric Buddhism, those of wrathful deities.

g.47 Yeshé Dé
ye shes sde

ཡེ་ཤེས་སྡེ།

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Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Yeshé Dé (late eighth to early ninth century) was the most prolific translator of sūtras into Tibetan. Altogether he is credited with the translation of more than one hundred sixty sūtra translations and more than one hundred additional translations, mostly on tantric topics. In spite of Yeshé Dé's great importance for the propagation of Buddhism in Tibet during the imperial era, only a few biographical details about this figure are known. Later sources describe him as a student of the Indian teacher Padmasambhava, and he is also credited with teaching both sūtra and tantra widely to students of his own. He was also known as Nanam Yeshé Dé, from the Nanam (*sna nam*) clan.

